THE
PRIVILEGE.
Dag Heward-Mills

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DAG HEWARD-MILLS

Parchment House

Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Bible

THE PRIVILEGE

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CHAPTER 1
What is a Privilege?

For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, THEY URGENTLY PLEADED WITH US FOR THE PRIVILEGE OF SHARING IN THIS SERVICE TO THE LORD'S PEOPLE.

2 Corinthians 8:3-4 (NIV)

Serving God's people will always be a privilege. There is no greater honour and no greater privilege than to become a servant of the Most High God. If you understand what it means to be a shepherd, you would plead for a chance to serve in that capacity.

A privilege is a special opportunity to do something. Actually, becoming a shepherd is a special opportunity given to you by God Himself.

A privilege is a right or benefit given to some people and not to others. Indeed, the benefits of being a shepherd are not enjoyed by everyone.

A privilege is a special advantage that is not enjoyed by everyone.

A privilege is a benefit enjoyed only by certain people.

A privilege is a special exemption granted to certain people.

A privilege is an advantage or source of pleasure granted to someone. God gives you an advantage and a source of blessings when He makes you a shepherd. Being a shepherd will be a blessing to you! Shepherds will care for people but the shepherd also receives many blessings because he is a shepherd.

The ministry of Jesus Christ is a privilege indeed. To be in the ministry is to be given a special opportunity to do something.

To become a shepherd is to be given a right and a benefit that is not given to others.

Not everyone enjoys the benefit of being a shepherd. Shepherds are given a special advantage that is not enjoyed by others.

You must grasp every opportunity that God gives you to be one of His shepherds.

The ministry of a shepherd is not a heavy load that changes your life negatively.

The ministry of Jesus Christ is not a burden. It is a privilege!

When God called you to be a shepherd, He was giving you a special advantage that is not experienced by many people.

It is important that you do not see God's call on your life as a bother. Do not see the work of a shepherd as an irritating inconvenience in your life!

God cannot inconvenience you! You must never show irritation on your face when it comes to the work of God. You must never complain when you are given a chance to be a shepherd. No one in his right mind will complain about a great privilege being given to him. It is only when you do

not understand the privilege and the honour being done you that you would complain, murmur or grumble about being a shepherd.

This little book is an attempt to show you how privileged you are to be trained and appointed as a shepherd. From this time onwards, you must appreciate God's grace to you when invited to become a shepherd. Indeed, the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to you! God is calling you to join the army of shepherds.

CHAPTER 2
The Privilege of Being a Shepherd Like Jesus

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

John 10:11

A great privilege is bestowed upon you when you take up the job of a shepherd.

Jesus Christ was a shepherd! He called Himself the Good Shepherd!

If you accept to be a shepherd, you are actually accepting a privilege and not a job! You are privileged to have the job that Jesus Christ had on earth!

Jesus Christ was a shepherd. What an honour it is to join Jesus Christ Himself in His chosen profession!

The shepherding office is very important. That is why Jesus Himself did that job whilst He was on earth. Remember that sheep were scattered not because they didn't have an apostle or prophet, but because they didn't have a shepherd.

But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

Matthew 9:36

Jesus Christ called Himself the Good Shepherd. What a privilege to be able to join Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world in this work of shepherding! A shepherd is a pastor and a covering for the sheep. The work of shepherding involves visiting people, praying for them, counselling with the word of God and interacting with them. The work of shepherding involves preaching and teaching the word of God. In Psalm 23, we have a clear picture of our Lord's shepherding activities. We are privileged to join Jesus Christ in these shepherding duties.

1. A shepherd is privileged to help people prosper.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." (Psalm 23:1) "I shall not want" simply means I shall not be in difficulty, I shall not be poor and I shall not lack any good thing. A shepherd is privileged to help people to prosper.

2. A shepherd is privileged to provide good food for the sheep.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." (Psalm 23:2). The best food for sheep is the green pasture. If you were a sheep, you would love it if your shepherd led you through green pastures. Jesus said to Peter, "If you love me, feed my sheep." (John 21:16).

The burden of owning animals is their dependence on you for food. If you run a zoo full of animals, you will discover how the animals depend on you for food. The dogs in your house are dependent on you for food. The horses in your stables are waiting for you to bring food to them. Every animal that you own depends on you for sustenance. That is why today there are hotels for dogs and cats so that the animals can be looked after while their owners are away. The sheep whom the Lord has given you are dependent on you for food. It is a privilege to feed God's people!

3. A shepherd is privileged to lead people.

"He leadeth me beside the still waters." (Psalm 23:2). Leadership is an important privilege of shepherds. Every shepherd is also a leader. Many people scramble to be leaders because of the privileges of being a leader. Indeed, it is a great privilege to be a leader.

Everything in a nation, in a church or a group rises and falls on the type of leaders there. In certain countries, you can literally see the countries come alive under the leadership of good leaders. Where there are bad leaders, the country is littered with huts, poor people and overflowing with criminals.

A good shepherd is a good leader! Every shepherd has the privilege of making himself into the best leader possible.

A shepherd must read books on leadership!

A shepherd must pass the tests of leadership!

A shepherd must avoid all the bad traits of poor leaders!

It is easy to find bad leaders! They are everywhere! Most poor countries are led by bad leaders! There are many countries that were once rich, prosperous and flourishing but have been made poor by bad leaders. It is interesting to observe the outcome of poor leadership. Leadership in the church is the same. Under a good shepherd, the church prospers and grows. Under bad leaders, the church goes around in circles.

Good leadership is not the same as being friendly. In cultures where friendship and relationships are important, people equate niceness with good leadership. Being handsome is not the same as being a good leader. Handsome people always attract a following. You will find out with time that being handsome or being a woman's man is not the same as being a good leader. As a shepherd you will have the privilege of being one of the good leaders of God's people.

4. A shepherd is privileged to restore the souls of people.

"He restoreth my soul." (Psalm 23:3). Every shepherd is a guide and a leader of fallen souls in need of salvation, cleansing, reconciliation, sanctification and holiness. The privilege of a shepherd is to restore people. The privilege of a shepherd is not to give up on anyone. "He restoreth my soul" speaks of the restorative power of a shepherd.

If you are a good shepherd, people will wonder how you are able to work with certain people. Those who are written off by others will become your jewels when you become a good shepherd. A good shepherd has the privilege of having people who look up to him with eyes of love - people who know that they would not exist without him. The Bible is clear: "… if any brother be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual must restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering yourselves lest thou also be tempted." (Galatians 6:1).

5. A shepherd is privileged to be with the people in the time of their difficulty.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." (Psalm 23:4). A shepherd is privileged to be with people in their time of great crisis. He must be physically present at the scene of the trouble. This is why heads of state make an effort to appear at disaster zones when things happen. Presidents are

criticized when they do not show up on the scene of tragedy, sorrow and death. In a sense, a president is like the shepherd of the whole nation. His presence alone calms things down.

A shepherd will attend more and more sad functions as the years go by.

A shepherd is expected to make himself available in the valley of the shadow of death. The valley of the shadow of death speaks of the dark places and difficult seasons of life.

A shepherd has the privilege of standing with the sheep in hospital.

A shepherd has the privilege of being in the home of bereaved ones.

A shepherd has the privilege of being at the funeral home.

A shepherd has the privilege of being at the graveside.

A shepherd has the privilege of wielding a rod and a staff to comfort the sheep.

6. A shepherd is privileged to help the sheep overcome their enemies.

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." (Psalm 23:5). A shepherd has the privilege of warding off the enemies of the sheep. Life is full of enemies. Everyone on this earth lives under a constant threat of enemies. Sometimes an enemy is far away but what he says, thinks or does affects you in your house. A shepherd has the privilege of stabilizing, encouraging and helping the sheep overcome their enemies.

Enemies are full of hatred.

Enemies wish they could destroy you.

Enemies wish they could consume you.

They are full of jealousy and hatred.

Oh, how your enemies wish to hear some bad news about you!

Through your privileged shepherding work, the sheep will overcome evil spirits, overcome evil men, overcome strange women and overcome satan himself. It is a privilege to fight the enemies of God's people.

7. A shepherd is privileged to anoint the sheep.

"...Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." (Psalm 23:5). A shepherd is privileged to anoint the sheep. It is only by the power of the Holy Spirit that any Christian can become whom he is supposed to be. A shepherd is privileged to help people to receive the Holy Spirit through the power of God.

In the Middle East, shepherds rub their sheep with ointment to ward off the flies and insects. The smell of the ointment keeps the flies away from the sheep. It is your privilege to rub your sheep with ointment.

Anoint them with oil!

Reinhard Bonnke said the Lord told him to have Fire Conferences so that all the new converts

at his crusades would receive the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues. This effort to let the new converts receive the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues is the shepherd anointing the sheep with oil. What a privilege to ensure that your sheep receive the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues.

CHAPTER 3
The Privilege of Being Honoured As a Shepherd

For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. And NO MAN TAKETH THIS HONOUR UNTO HIMSELF, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

Hebrews 5:1-4

A great honour is bestowed upon you when you take up the job of a shepherd.

Jesus Christ was an honoured shepherd! He called Himself the Good Shepherd!

If you accept to be a shepherd, you are actually accepting an honour and not a job! You are privileged and honoured by Jesus Christ!

Jesus Christ was a shepherd. What an honour it is to join Jesus Christ Himself in His profession!

No one takes this honour to himself. Which honour is this? The honour of being a priest and an intercessor for God's people!

What a privilege it is to have been honoured by God. When you become a shepherd, you have received honour from God Himself. Honour is something that is bestowed on you. You cannot honour yourself. Every country has a way of honouring its citizens. In England, the Queen bestows honour on those she deems worthy. People receive Nobel prizes as signs of honour for their achievements in various fields of endeavour.

What is this honour for? Why is the job of shepherding an honour?

1. It is a great honour to be chosen from among men.

It is an honour to be chosen out of the group. Every shepherd is chosen from among men. On the day that you are chosen, there are several other people who could also be chosen. God chooses you out of a group and honours you above your colleagues. It is indeed a great privilege.

2. It is a great honour to be ordained to have a job in things pertaining to God.

Those who work in the banks have a job in things pertaining to dollars, pounds, shillings and cedis. Those who work in hospitals have a job in things pertaining to the human body, blood, sickness and disease. Those who work in construction have a job in things pertaining to cement, wood, nails, salaries of staff, etc. When you are a shepherd, you have a job in things pertaining to God.

3. It is a great honour to relate to God directly on behalf of people.

Those who work as shepherds spend their time offering gifts and sacrifices to God. This means they come in contact with God all the time. What an honourable job when you are constantly interacting with Almighty God on behalf of people. It is an honour to know about the gifts and

sacrifices that people are making to their God.

These are private things that you are privileged to know about. What an honourable job this is, to relate directly with God. It is a privilege to be a go-between between the people and God.

4. It is an honour to be chosen to have compassion on people.

A person who is chosen to be a shepherd is expected to have compassion on the ignorant.

What an amazing job this is! God gives you the discretion to care for people in the best way you can.

Imagine that your job is to show mercy and kindness to people who need it! Is it not God who shows mercy to people? Are you not being given a job where you have to act like God and show kindness to people? What an honourable and highly esteemed position God is giving to you!

5. It is an honour to be chosen because you are surrounded with your own sins.

> **And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?**
>
> **Acts 3:12**

If you were qualified to do the job of a shepherd, perhaps, it would be different. But you clearly do not qualify. You are yourself compassed about with sin and iniquity. What a privilege therefore it is to find a place in the leadership of the church! Peter knew that he was not a shepherd because he was a holy man.

CHAPTER 4
The Privilege of Being Brought Near As a Shepherd

And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi: SEEMETH IT BUT A SMALL THING UNTO YOU, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, TO BRING YOU NEAR TO HIMSELF to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them? And HE HATH BROUGHT THEE NEAR TO HIM, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also? For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord: and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?

Numbers 16:8-11

You are being brought near when you take up the job of a shepherd.

Jesus Christ was a great shepherd! He called Himself the Good Shepherd!

If you accept to be a shepherd, you are actually just being brought near! Being a shepherd is being brought near to Jesus Christ and to God!

Jesus Christ was a shepherd. What an honour it is to be drawn closer and closer still!

1. It is a privilege to be made a shepherd of God's people:

Korah was privileged to be a leader in the house of God. Korah and certain sons of Levi were filled with pride and forgot about the great privilege that had been shown to them in making them shepherds. Moses pointed out the greatness of the shepherding job to these proud upstarts.

2. It is a privilege to be separated from the congregation:

Korah was privileged to be separated from the rest of the congregation. God indeed separated you from the rest of the masses when He decided to make you a shepherd. It is a great privilege to be separated from the rest of the congregation for the great and honourable job of being a shepherd.

3. It is a privilege to be brought near to God.

Korah was privileged to be brought near because of his appointment to leadership. When you become a shepherd, you are automatically brought near to God. If you are made a minister of state, you are automatically brought near to the president of the nation. My job as a shepherd has not brought me near to surgeons and physicians. It has brought me near to God. Today, you must relish the blessing of being brought near. It is an honour to be brought near to see, to hear and to know things that few will ever know.

Nearness is the great privilege that must be cherished and guarded fiercely. Your "near" relationship with God is what gives birth to everything else. Your "near" relationship with anyone is what yields amazing fruits. Whenever you have a chance to choose, choose nearness rather than money. There are people who take certain jobs because they will earn more money. It is better to be near with a lower salary than to be far away with a higher salary.

Almighty God was angry with Korah because he did not value his nearness to God.

4. It is a privilege for your family to be brought near as well.

Korah's family was privileged to be brought near. The ministry is a privilege because your family gets to be brought closer as well. Korah forgot all the privileges that he had and began to accuse Moses of wrongdoing.

CHAPTER 5
The Privilege of Joining a Special Family of Shepherds

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "BRING THE TRIBE OF LEVI NEAR AND SET THEM BEFORE AARON THE PRIEST, THAT THEY MAY SERVE HIM. And they shall perform the duties for him and for the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, to do the service of the tabernacle. They shall also keep all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, along with the duties of the sons of Israel, to do the service of the tabernacle. YOU SHALL THUS GIVE THE LEVITES TO AARON AND TO HIS SONS; THEY ARE WHOLLY GIVEN TO HIM FROM AMONG THE SONS OF ISRAEL. So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons that they may keep their priesthood, but the layman who comes near shall be put to death." Again the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Now, behold, I HAVE TAKEN THE LEVITES FROM AMONG THE SONS OF ISRAEL instead of every first-born, the first issue of the womb among the sons of Israel. So the Levites shall be Mine.

Numbers 3:5-12 (NASB)

If you accept to be a shepherd, you are actually accepting to be a part of a special family of shepherds!

A great privilege is bestowed upon you when you take up the job of a shepherd.

Jesus Christ is the good shepherd! He called Himself the Good Shepherd!

You are privileged to join a unique family!

Jesus Christ was a shepherd. What a privilege it is to join this family where Jesus Christ Himself is the head!

1. It is a privilege to be a part of the tribe of Levi.

When you become a shepherd, you join a special family – the family of Levi.

One of the greatest privileges of being a shepherd is that you are part of a special family. A family of shepherds! A family of priests!

When you become a shepherd, you join the brotherhood of priests. As part of the Levitical family, you enjoy all the privileges and benefits of the Levites. When God welcomes you into the work of a shepherd, you have been privileged to be part of this amazing family.

Today, all my close spiritual brothers and sisters are "Levites". Almost every friend that I have is a pastor. Almost every close relative that I have is a pastor or a shepherd. My entire social life revolves in and around the lives of other shepherds and pastors.

2. It is a privilege to live for God and not for money.

"Bring the tribe of Levi near and set them before Aaron the priest, that they may serve him" (Numbers 3:6, NASB). Not everyone serves God! Many people serve their bellies! Most people serve money! It is a privilege to have been chosen to serve something higher and greater than money.

Remember that the earth is cursed because of the sins of Adam. Because the ground yields very little, it is very difficult to prosper. It is very difficult to prosper and most men live their lives trying to get something to eat or drink. God has given you the privilege of being a shepherd. Your life will therefore be spent serving God instead of following after money. As a shepherd, you have the privilege of having a higher kind of life. As a shepherd, God has given you the rare privilege of being a Levite.

3. It is a privilege to be chosen to work in the tabernacle.

Working in the tabernacle is like working in God's bedroom. To be invited to work in someone's bedroom, you must be very close and personal. God has His personal servants who come to work on the furnishings of the tabernacle. They have duties in the innermost sanctum. Their lives and duties have to do with the personal things of God.

What a privilege to be asked to work in the private and sanctified space where God has chosen to work among men! What a privilege to be a shepherd! If God has given you a chance to be a shepherd do not joke with it! If God has given you a chance to be a shepherd do not hide from Him!

CHAPTER 6
The Privilege of a High-Ranking Job Like Shepherding

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

Philippians 3:13-17

A great privilege is bestowed upon you when you take up the high-ranking job of a shepherd.

Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd! He called Himself the Good Shepherd!

If you accept to be a shepherd, you are actually accepting a high-ranking job.

You are privileged to have a high-ranking job.

Jesus Christ was a shepherd. What a privilege it is to have a high-ranking job!

Why Shepherding is a High-Ranking Job

1. A shepherd's job is high-ranking because God Himself does that job.

Shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness;

1 Peter 5:2 (NASB)

2. A shepherd's job is considered to be high-ranking because Jesus Christ Himself does that job.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

Hebrews 13:20

3. A shepherd's job is considered to be a high-ranking job because it is a high calling.

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:14

The call to be a shepherd is a high calling. It is a high calling because that is the call Jesus had – the call to be a shepherd. The privilege of a high calling must not be taken lightly. The high calling of God is a call to an important job. The high calling of God is a call to a superior position.

Perhaps, in this life you will never have a more important job than to be a shepherd. Being a shepherd is a distinguished and exalted position. If you are a shepherd, God has given you a big-

time job in His house.

Remember that all of us are the sheep of His hand. God Himself is our Shepherd. God is elevating you from being one of the sheep to being one of the shepherds. This is what Paul calls the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

4. Being a shepherd is high-ranking because you are a manager in God's house.

> And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.
>
> Genesis 41:55

You are the person who has control and direction of the institution. The direction in which everything will go depends on you. You are the one who handles and controls the resources of the church. If the church prospers, it is up to you. If the church is impoverished it is also your fault.

5. Being a shepherd is high-ranking because you are a supervisor in God's house.

Is it not a blessing to be made a supervisor?

> And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him OVERSEER OVER HIS HOUSE, and all that he had he put into his hand. And it came to pass from the time that he had made him OVERSEER in his house, AND OVER ALL THAT HE HAD, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.
>
> Genesis 39:4-5

6. Being a shepherd is high-ranking because you are a director in God's house.

> But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. And he led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea overwhelmed their enemies.
>
> Psalm 78:52-53

Is it not a privilege for God to raise you up to become a director in His house? In many ways, a shepherd directs the lives of the sheep. What an honour and a privilege!

7. Being a shepherd is high-ranking because you are an administrator in God's house.

> So Potiphar gave Joseph complete administrative responsibility over everything he owned. With Joseph there, he didn't worry about a thing—except what kind of food to eat! Joseph was a very handsome and well-built young man,
>
> Genesis 39:6 (NLT)

What a privilege for you to administer God's wisdom, power and gifts to His people. He has made you like Joseph who was the administrator of Egypt. The problem of hunger was solved by Joseph. Joseph administered all the grain and all the food and all the provisions to the people of Egypt. This will be your job as a shepherd – to remove hunger, want and need.

8. Being a shepherd is high-ranking because you are a governor in God's house.

During the colonial era, Great Britain appointed governors over their colonies. There was a

governor in Nigeria, a governor in Ghana, a governor in Sierra Leone. One of the famous governors in Ghana was called Sir Gordon Guggisberg. Gordon Guggisberg proposed a ten-year development plan and also sixteen principles of education for Ghana. He built the school I attended, the Achimota School, the deep water Takoradi Harbour and increased the length of the motorable roads in the country. He also built the famous Korle-bu Teaching Hospital where I was trained to be a doctor. These governors were basically Prime Ministers of the countries. They had plans to develop the countries and educate their colonies.

If God has made you a governor of His church, He is expecting you to develop the church and to educate the members of the church. What a great honour it is for God to make you a governor!

Can't you see that you have been given a high-ranking job? You must develop the church and educate the members with the word of God.

9. Being a shepherd is high-ranking because you are a superintendent and an overseer in God's house.

> And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him OVERSEER OVER HIS HOUSE, and all that he had he put into his hand. And it came to pass from the time that he had made him OVERSEER in his house, AND OVER ALL THAT HE HAD, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.
>
> Genesis 39:4-5

Notice how Joseph was described as the overseer of the house of Potiphar. A shepherd oversees everything. Just like Joseph in Egypt, everything is put into the hands of the overseer. God is making you the overseer of all of God's people. What a privilege that is! A shepherd is truly the superintendent and overseer of the house of God.

10. Being a shepherd is high-ranking because you are delivered from all low-ranking, routine and minor jobs.

> And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, WHOM THOU KNOWEST TO BE THE ELDERS OF THE PEOPLE, AND OFFICERS OVER THEM; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.
>
> Numbers 11:16-17

Being a shepherd is to be elevated above the rank of a subordinate for the rest of your life. Even if you are given an inferior and sub-standard job in the secular world, in the house of God you are elevated into the distinguished and exceptional position of a shepherd. You will never be called second-rate in the house of God. There is nothing dull or inferior about the job of a shepherd - you will notice that the people who were chosen to bear the burden with Moses were elders and officers in the congregation.

CHAPTER 7
The Privilege of Being Part of a Government of Shepherds

And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, GOVERNMENTS, diversities of tongues.

1 Corinthians 12:28

A great privilege is bestowed upon you when you take up the job of a shepherd.

Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd and shepherds govern the church of God.

If you accept to be a shepherd, you are actually accepting to be a part of the government of the church.

Even if you are not a part of the government of your country, you are privileged to be a part of the government of the church!

Jesus Christ was a shepherd. What a privilege it is to be a part of God's government!

The privilege of being a shepherd is that you are offered an invitation to be a part of a government. God has given you the privilege of being part of governing His church.

Shepherding is an opportunity to use the gift of governments. What a privilege it is to be a part of a government! What is the gift of government? The word "government" is translated from the Greek word, *kubernesis,* which means a steering, pilotage, or guiding. This gift of governments is exactly the same thing as the gift of being a shepherd or pastor.

The shepherd is to use the gift of governments to guide the sheep to "good places" (green pastures - Psalm 23:2).

Many people live their whole lives trying to get into government. They desire to be in places of authority and have the job and the privilege of being in the government. They would love to be the president, the vice president or a minister of state. After each election people are heartbroken and disappointed because they did not win. I have seen many people disillusioned and lifeless when they are not chosen to be part of the government. Being part of a government is truly a privileged job. But it is a privilege that God is inviting you to. God is giving you the privilege of being a part of the government of His church.

We need to soberly reflect on the implications of leading people. When someone does not have the ability to govern in the natural, the whole nation is thrown into chaos. There are bad governments everywhere. The level of poverty, war, and instability that exist in many countries reveals the lack of good governments. When God invites you to be a shepherd, He is inviting you to be at the very top of society.

CHAPTER 8
The Privilege of Having a Job That Requires Very High Qualifications of a Shepherd

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

1 Timothy 3:2-7

A great privilege is bestowed upon you when you take up the job of a shepherd.

Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd! He called Himself the Good Shepherd!

If you are accepted as a shepherd, it actually proves that you have very high qualifications.

Jesus Christ had very high qualifications. What a privilege it is to join this family where only those with very high qualifications are a part!

The privilege of becoming a shepherd is that it is an offer and an invitation to have a job that requires you to be highly qualified.

There are few jobs that require as high a qualification as shepherding.

1. To become a shepherd, you must have a desire for the privilege of shepherding.

I have never heard of a job in the bank for which you must first have a desire.

It is a good thing for church members to desire the work of a bishop. As you are filled with a desire for God's work, a great grace will come over you. People in the church must be taught to aspire for the highest positions in the church. It is biblical to desire the highest office in the church.

This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

1 Timothy 3:1

Do not just desire to be an usher! Do not just desire to sing in the choir! Desire to be a shepherd! I used to play the drums and the organ in church. But I wanted to go as high as I could. I wanted to be a shepherd!

2. To become a privileged shepherd, you must have a divine call.

You must have a divine call. The ministry is not a human institution. The Bible makes it clear that you need to have a divine call to serve in a certain capacity.

And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is CALLED OF GOD, as was Aaron.

Hebrews 5:4

One of the manifestations of a divine call is a supernatural desire and interest in the work of the ministry. Paul had a supernatural interest for the salvation of all men, including the Jews.

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.
Romans 10:1

Paul had this desire in him and it was this desire that was translated into practical ministry time and time again. Do not take the call of God lightly. You could pay with your life for disobeying the divine call.

I want to emphasize here that it is important to respond to the call of God on your life. If you were standing downstairs and your boss called for you from upstairs, wouldn't you run to him? What do you think would happen if you ignored his calls when he knew that you could hear him? You might lose your job! If God calls you and you refuse to heed the call, you might be endangering your very life. Accept the privilege right now and flow with the call of God!

3. You must be willing to be a shepherd.

...for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! FOR IF I DO THIS THING WILLINGLY, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.

1 Corinthians 9:16-17

There must be a willing commitment to obey the call of God on your life. Some people know that they are called! They even have a desire to do the work, yet you do not see any commitment in them.

Notice that Isaiah didn't say, "Here am I, SEND HIM!" He said, "Here am I, send ME!" (Isaiah 6:8). To offer yourself, is a sign that you are willing.

Make great efforts to be available and involved in day-to-day church life. If there is no extra commitment or willing sacrifice you are missing something.

4. You must have a godly character.

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

1 Timothy 3:2-6

There is no substitute for godliness and a good character. Your faithfulness is the cornerstone of your character. When I started out in ministry, I was impressed by well-spoken people. As the years passed, I lost confidence in the outward presentation. I have found people who are quiet, not so impressive, but faithful in character. These people are to be preferred one hundred times more than outwardly impressive pastors. Your Bible school certificate, your nice dressing and ability to sing will not earn you a position in the pastorate. It is a great privilege for you to be selected for this honour.

Even with stringent character filters, we still have some sticks turning out to be snakes.

Whenever there is a test, you will notice some of your firewood sticks turn into snakes. Remember the incident when Paul was gathering some sticks to light a fire. When he lit the fire, a snake jumped out from among the sticks. (Acts 28:3).

As a senior pastor, beware of people whom you feel under pressure to promote. Beware of people whom you feel under pressure to show appreciation to. Beware of people whom you feel under pressure to increase their salaries. Such people will not be satisfied with any show of love. There is only one qualification for people who want to join the pastoral team - they have to stay around long enough. They have to "company" around long enough for time and the elements to test them.

Pastors, do not just accept impressive ministers from other churches to work with you. It could be the mistake of your life. When the apostles had to choose a replacement for Judas, what did they say? Whom did they choose?

> **Wherefore of these men which have COMPANIED WITH US all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.**
>
> **Acts 1:21-22**

What did they do? They didn't choose the best worship leader or the most charismatic speaker. I take no notice of sweet words showered on me by some job-seekers. All I say in my mind is, "I commend you to God and to time."

No one can be a shepherd unless you know his character. You can never know someone's character unless you have known him for some years.

The whole of 1 Timothy 3 is a catalogue of character qualifications for every serious-minded minister. Read it for yourselves. You will not read anything about a bishop or pastor having to be anointed or gifted. There is no instruction that a pastor must be talented or charming.

5. To become a shepherd, your wife must also have some qualifications.

The character of the pastor's wife has a bearing on his ministry (1 Timothy 3:11). A Bible school certificate is not the only qualification for the ministry.

6. To become a shepherd, you must be blameless.

To become a shepherd, you must be sober, vigilant, of good behaviour, apt to teach, not given to wine, not quarrelsome and not greedy for money (1 Timothy 3:2-3, 8).

7. To become a shepherd you must be patient, a ruler of your own house, not a novice, of good report and already proved and tested.

> **…but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;**
> **Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; …**
>
> **1 Timothy 3:3-4, 6-7**

CHAPTER 9
The Privilege of Becoming a Highly Skilled Shepherd

I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

John 10:14

Jesus Christ is the highly skilled Great Shepherd! He called Himself the Good Shepherd!

A great privilege is bestowed upon you when you take up the job of a shepherd because you will become highly skilled too.

If you accept to be a shepherd, you are actually accepting to be a part of a special family of highly skilled men!

You are privileged to join a family with a unique set of special skills.

What a privilege it is to join this family of highly skilled shepherds.

The privilege of being a shepherd is that it is an offer and an invitation to become a highly skilled person. You will have to develop several skills if you are going to become a shepherd. Apart from meeting the requirements, you need to develop certain skills.

Unskilled people are usually the poorest in the world. For instance, people who harvest pepper and tomatoes are much poorer than those who make and sell iPhones and cars. It takes much more skill to make an iPhone or a car than it does to harvest pepper and oranges. Generally, the more skills you have the richer you become.

Becoming a shepherd allows you to develop a set of skills that are so valuable that they make you into a prosperous person. Are you not honoured to develop a set of skills that turn you into a prosperous person?

Anyone who is unskilled in this life is doomed to poverty. There must be something that you are able to do well. Can you type? Can you play an instrument? Can you drive a car? Can you use software? Can you win a case in court? Can you look after sick people? Can you turn cocoa into chocolate? Can you turn oranges into orange juice? All these are skills that make people rich. Without any skill, no one will need you or want you.

Let us go through some of the skills that are needed to be a shepherd.

Special Skills of a Shepherd

1. The skill of relating with God

It is a privilege to relate with God! Relating with God is a skill you must learn. Most people do not know how to relate with God. A disciplined person who has consistent prayer and personal Bible study shows a deep relationship with God. Without a personal relationship with God, you are going nowhere.

2. The skill of listening to preaching videos

Your ability to listen to preaching and teaching videos for long hours shows that you will one day be a preacher. It is a skill that many people do not have.

3. The skill of watching pastors/people preaching

You will become what you are watching all the time. Your ability to watch preaching and teaching for long hours reveals how you will be preaching yourself one day. It is a skill which many people do not have.

4. The skill of waiting on God

To wait on God in a room or a house for days on end is a skill that few people have. If you do not wait on God, you will not hear from Him. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength (Isaiah 40:31). In the book of Acts, Apostle Paul was waiting on God with some prophets and teachers. As they waited on God and ministered to him, the Holy Spirit spoke and began a brand-new mission to the ends of the world. This new and amazing mission would never have come to pass if they had not learnt how to wait on the Lord.

> **Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.**
>
> **Acts 13:1-3**

5. People-handling skills

The phrase "apt to teach" (1 Timothy 3:2) reveals the ability of a shepherd to lead and influence people. Teaching includes being able to handle people of all sorts. A person who is quarrelsome and cantankerous will not have people handling skills. Shepherding is a great privilege because you will learn people handling skills. Once you know how to handle people you are ready to be a great leader.

6. Leadership skills

> **So the Lord said to Moses, "Take Joshua son of Nun, a man IN WHOM IS THE SPIRIT OF LEADERSHIP, and lay your hand on him."**
>
> **Numbers 27:18 (NIV)**

Leadership is a skill which is developed in every shepherd. This is because a shepherd is basically a leader. The art of leadership is much more than meets the eye. Most people who are in leadership are natural leaders and they do what comes to them naturally. Everyone who is trained in shepherding will be trained in leadership skills. What a privilege it is to have such life skills!

7. Preaching skills

People who want to be shepherds or lay pastors must develop the ability to teach and to preach. The principal duty of a shepherd is to feed the flocks. Someone who wants to be a shepherd must demonstrate experience in preaching and teaching. The best way to learn how to preach is to listen to preaching tapes and preach the same thing. Timothy was told to preach the same things that he had heard Paul preaching.

And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, THE SAME commit thou to faithful men...

2 Timothy 2:2

CHAPTER 10
The Privilege of Royalty

But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth THERE IS LAID UP FOR ME A CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

2 Timothy 4:5-8

A great privilege is bestowed upon you when you take up the job of a shepherd.

Jesus Christ is the King of kings and the Lord of lords! If you accept to be a shepherd, you are actually accepting to be a part of the royal family of heaven.

You are privileged to join a royal family! In heaven, you will not be outside the royal family and looking in.

Jesus Christ is a shepherd and a king! When you become a shepherd, you will also become a shepherd and a king. What a privilege it is to join the royal family where Jesus Christ Himself will be the King of kings and the Lord of lords!

By doing the work of a shepherd, you are most likely to inherit a crown of life, a crown of righteousness and a crown of glory. Remember that a crown is given to only those who are royalty. Apart from the Queen of England, and other royalty, few other people wear crowns on earth.

Imagine that you are going to be part of the royal family when you get to heaven. Those of us who could not be part of a royal family on earth and who could never enter a palace to see what was behind the walls, will have a chance to experience royalty at its best.

Three different crowns are promised. A crown of life, a crown of righteousness and a crown of glory! What will you be doing wearing a crown if you are not part of a royal family? The crown of life is promised in two different passages of the Bible. However, the crown of glory and the crown of righteousness are promised in one passage.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, HE SHALL RECEIVE THE CROWN OF LIFE, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

James 1:12

And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan.
Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee A CROWN OF LIFE.

Revelation 2:8-10

The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.
And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a CROWN OF GLORY that fadeth not away.

1 Peter 5:1-4

Imagine that! Three whole crowns waiting for you! You will soon be even more glorious than the king or queen of England! And all this, just because you were a shepherd!

As part of the royal family in heaven, you will have many new privileges and blessings.

Blessings of becoming Royalty in Heaven

1. You will have the honour of wearing a crown.
2. You will have the honour of staying in a palace.
3. You will have the honour of wearing jewels.
4. You will have the honour having many servants.
5. You will have the honour of wearing beautiful royal clothes.
6. You will have the honour of relating with other members of the royal family in heaven.
7. You will have the honour of having special food made for you.
8. You will have the honour learning the king's protocol.
9. You will be closer to the throne and closer to where the action is.
10. You will have the honour of going for royal tours and royal holidays.
11. You will have the honour of greeting the public with a royal wave.
12. You will be honoured and celebrated as royalty throughout eternity.

Conclusion

It is time to take up the privilege of shepherding. God has His eyes on you and that is why He is giving you this special privilege. Forget those things that are behind. Many sad and bad things have already happened. They are such that you cannot undo them. You cannot unwind! You cannot change them! There are many things like that in this world. The only way to overcome them is to forget them. Thinking about them takes you deeper and further into despair and despondency. Only God can heal certain things! It is time for you to forget about the past so that you can reach out and be the shepherd that God wants you to be.

Reach forward to the privileges that are before you. God has called you to do great things for Him. You must reach forward to the mark of the high calling. You will not attain to the high calling by sitting in one position.

You must reach forth to the privileges that seem to be out of range. It is only by reaching forth to new things that you will forget the past and bear fruit. If you are following the Holy Spirit, you are not likely to be at the same spot in a year's time. The Spirit is always moving and as you follow Him, the main characteristic of your life will be movement. I see God changing things and

shifting things around!